

Public Works Committee
Meeting Minutes
9/7/2004 7:40-8:50 PM
Submitted by Doug Lowing
413-256-6045
pwc@lowing.com

The main topic was discussion of financial streams for public works.

The major sources for funding are:

1. Operating funds - recommended by town manager at the Selectboard and approved by town meeting. This is funded in the major part by local taxes. The items funded include
Personnel Services
Operation and Maintenance (fuel, material, etc.)
2. Capital - again, recommended by town manager at the Selectboard and approved by town meeting. This is project specific and again this is funded in the major part by local taxes.
3. Chapter 90 Highway transit funds are issued by the state based on road mileage, population, and income. Only certain items are permitted by the state, for example, it cannot be used for basic maintenance of roads (potholes) but it can be used for repaving. The ch. 90 funding is a long process. You file plans for a project request and wait for it to be approved. Then the town has to approve the money up front (the Rt. 9 intersection widening at the Common is an example.). Then the work has to be done. Then you have to file for reimbursement. The beginning of filing for widening the intersection was done some 5 years before it was finally approved by the state. At that point, the town must front the money or the funding falls through, and there is less chance of the state approving future projects.
4. Public Works Enhancement Grants are issued by the state and project specific. For example, rebuilding Old Belchertown Road from Larkspur Dr. to Rte. 9 was such a project. Amherst has not applied for such a grant in a while, the reason being if you do not have a good fitting project it is not worth the time to apply because you will not meet the competing applications.
5. Other state grants such as the 418 grant provide small amounts.
6. Transportation Improvement Projects are Federal money, dispersed by the Regional Planning Authority, with additional input from the Joint Transportation Committee and the Town. This is funded by 5 year appropriations.
7. Other Federal Grants, most come through the Regional Planning Authority,
8. Federal set-asides - line items or other legislation determined by the Federal representatives.